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PASSPORT TO CULTURE

Teacher's Resource Guide for **DANCE JAM**

American Youth Dance Company, Dance Innovations, and Newark Arts High School Dance Ensemble Grades 3-8



◀ *American Youth
Dance Company*

▼ *Dance
Innovations*



▼ *Newark Arts High School Dance Ensemble*



Dance Jam is an exciting and educational dance concert performed by three youthful New Jersey companies: American Youth Dance Company, Dance Innovations, and Newark Arts High School Dance Ensemble. The show provides an entertaining introduction to the art of dance with performances in

a broad range of dance styles. All these young companies exhibit the fun, creativity, style, technique, discipline, and dedication that are contemporary professional dance. Student audiences will have fun at

Dance Jam while learning about the art of dance.



The New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC) Arts Education Department presents the *Bell Atlantic Passport to Culture SchoolTime Performance Series*.

With *Passport to Culture*, Bell Atlantic and NJPAC open up a world of culture to you and your students, offering the best in live performance from a wide diversity of traditions and disciplines. At NJPAC's state-of-the-art facility in Newark, and with the support of Bell Atlantic, the SchoolTime Performance Series enriches the lives of New Jersey's students and teachers by inviting them to see, feel, and hear the joy of artistic expression. The exciting roster of performances ranges from the most successful New Jersey companies to performers of national and international renown. Meet-the-artist sessions and NJPAC tours are available to expand the arts adventure.

To help you enhance the live performance experience for your students, NJPAC provides this Teacher's Resource Guide and professional development workshops designed to reinforce the educational value of each program.

The *Bell Atlantic Passport to Culture SchoolTime Performance Series* can make a world of difference - to your students and to you - right here in New Jersey, at NJPAC.

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TO TEACHERS AND PARENTS:

The resource guide accompanying each performance is designed:

- to maximize students' enjoyment and appreciation of the performing arts;
- to extend the impact of the performance by providing discussion ideas, activities, and further reading that promote learning across the curriculum;
- to promote arts literacy by expanding students' knowledge of music, dance, and theater;
- to illustrate that the arts are a legacy reflecting the traditional values, customs, beliefs, expressions, and reflections of a culture;
- to use the arts to teach about the cultures of other people and to celebrate students' own heritage through self-expression;
- to reinforce the New Jersey Department of Education's Core Curriculum Content Standards in the arts.

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THE NEW JERSEY CORE CURRICULUM CONTENT STANDARDS

The *Dance Jam* performance and suggested activities in this guide offer well-rounded support of the Standards in Dance, grades 3-8. By attending this performance that features several dance genres and styles, students can increase their understanding and aesthetic awareness of dance. The show also provides an opportunity for instant comparison of these forms, further enhancing students' understanding of the many ways art and artists communicate. The accompanying activities address all the Standards. Students learn and practice critiquing within their own artistic processes by editing their work, and through discussion, analysis, and writing about dance performance. Through applied student research and the guide's information on "Customs, Cultures, and Social Forces," educators target the Standard that asks students to identify the origins of dance forms and their place in society. Other activities address planning a performance and careers in the arts. Information on the lives of the young performers will assist students' understanding of the discipline, dedication, and love of the art that professional dance demands. Through learning about the art of dance, students will learn about their own culture and popular art forms, and perhaps find the artist in themselves.

THE PERFORMANCE/ PRODUCTION

Dance Jam is an enjoyable and educational dance concert featuring three youthful New Jersey companies: American Youth Dance Company, Dance Innovations, and The Newark Arts High School Dance Ensemble. Traditional, classical, and contemporary dance unite in an entertaining spectacle that reflects the diversity of today's theatrical dance in America. Each company has a unique style of its own and presents original choreographies in ballet, modern, jazz, or tap dance.

The American Youth Dance Company's talented performers are of various ages but all have a love for dance and theater. In *DANCE I?*, they share their dedication with the audience, describing what dance means to them as they explore the unique styles of ballet, tap, jazz, and hip-hop jazz. *Swing*, a jazzy dance to updated Big Band and swing music, unites old and new jazz dance and music into a totally current, fun-filled statement of style and swing. Contemporary



American Youth Dance Company



Dance Innovations

culture and dance unite again in *Welcome to the Millennium*, a comedic tribute to life in the new century. It features theatrical jazz dance and an unusual, innovative tap dance section to a contemporary club music collage.

Dance Innovations is an ensemble of high school students many of whom have trained and performed together since childhood. Their training emphasizes a strong ballet foundation, which is evident in their performance of various dance styles. In a celebration of the smooth sleekness of Broadway-style jazz, dancers weave intricate patterns with hats and canes. This refined, elegant jazz style is contrasted with a high-energy jazz piece where dancers perform syncopated and synchronized rhythms with their bodies and with unusual props such as pie pans and brooms. The company also performs a modern dance in the choreographic style of Martha Graham. Here hard-edged body sculptures and angular shapes combine with strength and control to become a metaphor for self-determination and individual power. Another expressive and emotional

piece, *The Prayer*, fuses modern ballet, text, American Sign Language, and pantomime into a reflection on blessings and hope.

The Newark Arts High School Dance Ensemble consists of juniors and seniors who experience high school as a training ground for a professional career in dance. Their technique and dance-related classes are integrated with their academic studies throughout the school day. The ensemble also performs this year at New York City's Lincoln Center under the direction of American Ballet Theatre. In this project, students will experience all aspects of creating a dance and bringing it to the stage. In



Newark Arts High School Dance Ensemble

Dance Jam, they perform *Planet Drum*, a modern dance suite in the style of choreographer Lester Horton. Some movement themes are also inspired by African dance and these motifs accent the vocabulary of the choreography. This five-part suite tells of a mythic tribe, its superstitions, and its fear of change. In an ancient and sacred ritual, a young man is chosen to marry the queen. However, he loves another and seeks to choose his own destiny. Following custom, the tribe murders the girl he loves so the sacred ceremony can take place. The grieving young man rebels against his tribal duty. He wins his freedom, but he is cast out to live alone.

THE ARTISTS.

The artistic director/choreographers of the *Dance Jam* companies exemplify the idea that dance is an art form passed on from body to body. They nurture young performing artists as they themselves were trained and nurtured.



Susan McCutcheon Coutts is the founding artistic director and national award-winning choreographer of Dance Innovations, of Chatham, NJ. She was a scholarship student at the School of American

Ballet, associated with the New York City Ballet. A graduate of Mercyhurst College in Erie, PA, Susan received a postgraduate certification in Dance Movement Therapy from the University of Maryland. She founded Dance Innovations, a studio for dance instruction, in 1986. Under her direction, the student performance ensemble won awards at numerous national competitions. The Dance Innovations troupe soon became a professional company, earning bookings at Walt Disney World, Sea World, Universal Studios, and Epcot Center. The company was featured in New Jersey Network's film *Millennium at Morris*. The group excels in varied community outreach programs and the

studio offers movement training to exceptionally challenged children. Susan serves on the Arts Council of the Morris Area's Dance Panel.



Nancy King is founder and artistic director of American Youth Dance Company and American Jazz Dance Ensemble, divisions of The New Jersey

Foundation for Dance and Theatre Arts, housed at the King Centre for the Performing Arts in Wanaque, NJ. Since 1970, Nancy has led the Dance Company on several international tours, where the dancers earned universal acclaim for their eclectic repertoire. Nancy's unique style and award-winning choreography have gained national prominence. She is a popular master teacher throughout the country and has served on the faculty of William Paterson College, Wayne, NJ, and The Douglas Wassell Studios and Broadway Dance Center, both in New York City. She is past president of the NYC Dance Masters of America (DMA), and currently National Director to Miss Dance of America for DMA. A life member of The

National Registry of Who's Who, Nancy won the Excellence in Dance Award from *Dance Teacher Now* magazine. Her students appear in musicals on Broadway, off-Broadway, and in national and international tours.



Kim Richardson, artistic director of Newark Arts High School Dance Ensemble and choreographer of *Planet Drum*, has created the

opportunity at Arts High for talented Newark students to experience the professional training that she received at LaGuardia High School for the Performing Arts in New York City. After winning a scholarship to the Alvin Ailey American Dance Center and an apprenticeship in the Ailey Company, she earned a B.F.A. in dance from The Juilliard School. She performed with the companies of choreographers Talley Beatty and Bella Lewitsky, and in Italy, she choreographed and performed for commercial television. She now concentrates on teaching and promoting dance education, working with the NJ Department of Education in writing dance curriculum and assessment guidelines for the NJ Core Curriculum Content Standards in Dance (K-12).

THE ELEMENTS OF DANCE

All dance has three basic building blocks:

space - the whole design and use of the place in which a dance unfolds.

time - a measurable period during which movement or dance occurs. Dance makes the passage of time felt by dividing it into anything from complex, rhythmic patterns to long, unbroken stillnesses.

energy - the amount, or force of the movement, also sometimes referred to as the quality, color or texture of the movement.

Some additional terms that relate to *Dance Jam*.

balletic - of or relating to ballet.

choreographer - a person who creates dances.

choreography - patterns of movement and stillness.

ensemble - a group of performers working together as a unit.

plot - the story told in a play or dance.

technique - the manner in which basic dance movements are used or executed; the ability to execute or use such movements.



TALENT, DEDICATION, DISCIPLINE, JOY, AND HARD WORK

Young dancers preparing for professional careers in today's dance world must train in multiple styles and be prepared to make some sacrifices. With so much to learn, practice, discipline, and hard work are a must to succeed. The young dancer trains and rehearses after school and on weekends, may hold a part-time job, and must juggle these commitments with schoolwork. Both Dance Innovations and American Youth Dance Company tour extensively nationally and internationally. All three troupes perform community concerts in hospitals, nursing homes, churches, museums, and schools. This year, Arts High dancers will also be studying at Lincoln Center with the American Ballet Theatre. Most *Dance Jam* dancers are college bound. Although not all intend to pursue dance professionally, many hope to follow company alumni who now dance in ballet and modern companies, on Broadway, and in commercial television. Here's what some members of the *Dance Jam* cast say about their experiences and life styles:

ON STUDYING

CHRISTINA: I train or teach here (Dance Innovations) an average of five hours a day after school, plus I arrive at 7 a.m. on Saturdays. So dancing is like living another whole life. It really teaches you time management skills, I can tell you that! But you're willing to make that sacrifice because it's so important to you. (Christina Shelby from Madison is 18 and attends Madison H.S.)

SHANNON: Dance teaches you that you have to get it done! It teaches you to plan. (Shannon Teel from Wanaque is 16 and attends Lakeland Regional H.S.)

TIFFANY: Studying dance improves my hand-eye coordination and it's fun. (Tiffany Biera from Newark is 18 and attends Arts H.S.)

BARBARA: Friends at my school get overwhelmed if they have to do an hour of sports and then an hour of homework. I get home at 11 and then I start my work. Dance really makes you disciplined. (Barbara Russo from Chatham is 16 and attends Oak Knoll H.S. in Summit.)

JENNIFER: Dance teaches you perseverance. Sometimes it hurts, but you keep working and you get better and stronger. (Jennifer Jenkins from Newark is 17 and attends Newark Arts H.S.)

DERRICK: Dance gives me willpower and strength. It also helps me in soccer, basketball, and track. (Derrick Peterson from Ringwood is 14 and attends Lakeland Regional H.S.)

KELLY: Dance makes you a perfectionist. You become a better student because when you go home and do your homework you feel the same way, like: "I have to get it right!" (Kelly Hayes from Chatham is 17 and attends Oak Knoll H.S. in Summit.)

TALENT, DEDICATION, DISCIPLINE, JOY, AND HARD WORK *(continued)*

NICOLE: One of the biggest things you have to have is a really supportive family: to bring you to rehearsal, to pick you up at ten at night, and just to keep you going, encouraging your dedication and focus. (Nicole Betz from Chatham is 16 and attends Bayley Ellard H.S. in Madison.) *

ON PERFORMING

BARBARA: Every year we do a performance for handicapped children and we do an interactive section where the children get up and join us. Their faces light up and they really get into it. We make a difference in their day.

CHRISTINA: Our professional performances are amazing. They're such great opportunities. The first year that we went to Disney, it was such an honor and so much fun to do, but I really feel that my favorite performances are for Children's Specialized Hospital. During the performance you can just see that they're so happy. It means a lot to me to be able to give something that I love to other people and to make them happy.

CHRIS: I like it. You get to be in the center and you have lots of friends. (Chris King from Wanaque is 11 and attends Wanaque Elementary School.)

ON STYLES OF DANCE

LINDSAY: I like tap because of all the different rhythms and styles, but ballet helps you get better in all dancing. (Lindsay Mecca from Butler is 14 and attends Butler H.S.)

JEAN PAUL: I enjoy ballet, but modern, especially choreographed to gospel music, lets me express how I feel about the music, lets me express things that I can't say verbally. (Jean Paul from Newark is 16 and attends Arts H.S.)

TIFFANY: I like modern best — Graham, and especially Horton. The movement is so free and spiritual. It let's you express yourself.

NICOLE: I love jazz. I'm just a really hyper person and I like to express my feelings through jazz and get all my emotions out.

SARAH: I like ballet best. It's prettier and so elegant. If you can't do ballet, you can't do any dance! (Sarah Thomas from Newark is 16 and attends Arts H.S.)

CHRISTINA: Jazz is fun. You just can let it rip, put yourself into it and really punch it out. I also really like modern — all of the movement. It hits me. It really means a lot to me. I'd be interested in pursuing dancing with modern companies.

LISA: Broadway style jazz is my favorite. I love seeing Broadway shows and I enjoy expressing myself and entertaining people. I hope to be a Broadway jazz dancer. But so many styles overlap, so you can't just be totally jazz trained. It's really good to be versatile — it's an advantage. (Lisa Peluso from Florham Park is 18 and attends Hanover Park H.S.)

LAUREN: I love all jazz and its different styles like funk and hip-hop. I also love performing, portraying different roles and giving a lot. (Lauren Rudowsky of West Milford is 14 and attends West Milford H.S.)

CUSTOMS, CULTURES, AND SOCIAL FORCES

LANDMARK INFLUENCES ON CONTEMPORARY DANCE

Contemporary dance in the United States is a diverse world of styles and techniques. As creative choreographers experiment and expand their art, dance styles borrow from each other and from other art forms and are enriched. Boundaries between dance forms dissolve and innovators create new styles, but there is always a legacy. Dance today is a fusion of many forms of yesterday with a contemporary twist or turn.

All cultures have indigenous dances and social dances that celebrate their history and identity. Theatrical dance forms spring from these cultural and social roots. The forms grow and develop as societies and tastes change and artists are inspired to experiment.

BALLET

This dance genre developed from 16th and 17th century social court dances of French and Italian royalty. Today's classical ballet still retains the graceful elegance of its originators, as well as the fashion of men in tights and waistcoats. Ballet is characterized by an erect spine, pointed feet, open rotated legs, and formalized steps. However, over the centuries and today, ballet innovators continue to revolutionize the genre. In the early 1800s, dancer Marie Taglioni introduced the ballerina's pointe shoe. In the late 1800s, Marius Petipa's Imperial Russian Ballet expanded the ballet vocabulary to the technical brilliance now associated

Choreographers freely cross the boundaries that define dance forms as they take creative inspiration from cultural and social influences and from each other.



ESTHER LAURETTA

MODERN DANCE

Jamaican-born modern dancer/choreographer Garth Fagan formed Bucket Dance Theater, a company composed of inner city youth with no technical dance training. His athletic, showy modern dance style incorporates many influences including Caribbean and West African motifs. In 1987 he broke new ground with a work on pointe, *Footprints Dressed in Red*, for Dance Theatre of Harlem.

BALLET

Arthur Mitchell, the first African American to dance with the New York City Ballet, went on to found his own ballet company, The Dance Theatre of Harlem. This company's repertoire includes classical, neo-classical, and modern ballets infused with African-Caribbean dance motifs.

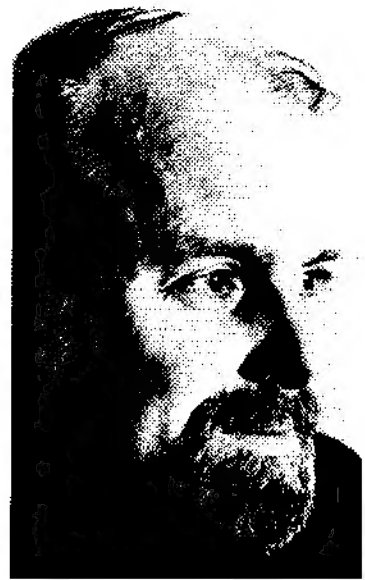
Mitchell's contemporary version of the classical ballet *Giselle* moves this story of love and betrayal from its original 19th century romantic setting to Louisiana's bayou.



E. JAMES S. BAKER

JAZZ DANCE

Bob Fosse, an eminent theater director/choreographer of the 60s and 70s, used the enticing movements and gestures of strippers, which he picked up as a young tap dancer in burlesque shows, as part of his choreographic vocabulary.



TAP DANCE

Savion Glover, a graduate of Newark Arts High, brought his unique tap style that incorporates break dancing and hip-hop to Broadway in *Bring in Da Noise, Bring in Da Funk*.

CUSTOMS, CULTURES, AND SOCIAL FORCES *(continued)*

with classical ballet style. The father of the modern ballet style, Mikhail Folkiné, was also from Russia. At the turn of the 20th century, his choreographies introduced updated subject matter and his style freed ballet movement from the strict steps and carriage of the traditional classical ballet. From the 1920s to the 80s, George Balanchine, the great Russian-American choreographer of the New York City Ballet, further contemporized ballet's technical virtuosity, speed, elegance, and form in his unique abstract neo-classic style that is a hallmark of modern ballet.

Ballet continues to grow and blossom, absorbing and influencing other genres. Its vocabulary is evident in the choreography and style of many jazz and modern dance choreographers, while modern ballet choreographers freely incorporate modern dance and jazz dance ideas into their works. Today's aspiring professionals study ballet technique as the foundation of their dance training to gain strength, grace, and virtuosity.

JAZZ AND TAP DANCE

Just as many cultures contributed to America's national identity, many cultural influences have merged to create jazz dance, a unique and distinctly American genre. Jazz dancing evolved from developments in jazz music and through generations of communication between cultures and theatrical artists.

Although American slave owners outlawed drums on southern plantations, the rhythms and movements of African dance survived as hand clapping, foot stomping, and tapping replaced the

accompanying drum. Later, in the social and music halls of the early 1900s, these percussive rhythms and steps developed by African Americans conversed with the step dancing and clogging of immigrants from Ireland, England, and Scotland to become tap dance. As jazz music evolved to ragtime, Dixieland, swing, and bebop, so did tapping evolve, grow, and flourish.

Tap dance plus the musical and rhythmic influences of jazz music combined with the social dancing of consecutive generations, developing into jazz dancing. Hallmarks of jazz dancing are that the popular dances of each generation become incorporated into its vocabulary and that jazz dance develops alongside jazz music and popular music. As in tap, syncopated rhythms that accent the offbeat are central to jazz music and jazz dancing. The cakewalk of the early 1800s, the foxtrot of the early 1900s, and the Charleston of the 1920s were popular social dances with origins in African American dance that led to the growth of jazz dance. The African dance influence gives jazz dancing its characteristic rhythmic body part isolations in both the limbs and the torso. The swing music era brought new social dances like jitterbug, boogie woogie and the Lindy hop into ballrooms, dance halls, and movie houses, inspiring new styles of jazz dance.

In the 30s and 40s, Hollywood popularized jazz dance through films featuring innovative jazz choreographers and dancers like Fred Astaire, Jack Cole, and Gene Kelly, who all influenced today's jazz dance. Fred Astaire blended jazz movements with the virtuosity and grace of ballet, Jack Cole brought modern dance vocabulary to jazz choreography, and Gene Kelly added gymnastic ability to all of these genres.

The arts always reflect developments in culture, society, and other art forms. Dance genres and styles affect each other as dance artists cross boundaries. In the 1930s, George Balanchine brought his style of ballet to the Broadway stage, infusing Broadway-style jazz dance with ballet's smooth and sparkling virtuosity. Choreographer Agnes De Mille brought modern dance's freedom and expressive ideas to this musical theater forum where dance serves to advance plot.

Jazz dance now incorporates this history and is constantly rejuvenated by new cultural influences and dance genres. Latin, Caribbean, and African dance continue to supply jazz dance choreographers with new movement ideas or motifs. In the 80s and 90s, new popular dances from break dancing to hip-hop and new music from rock and roll to rap have been absorbed into jazz dance just as earlier generations endowed the genre with their popular cultural forms.

MODERN DANCE

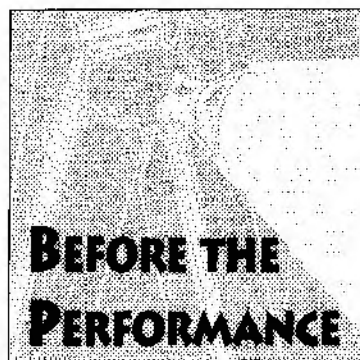
Modern dance is an individualistic and experimental approach to creating movement and choreography. It has an ongoing tradition of stretching dance boundaries. The diverse styles within this genre are named for the landmark founders, pioneers, and choreographers.

Often called the mother of modern dance, Isadora Duncan discarded the pointe shoes, codified steps, and court dance conventions of ballet at the turn of the 20th century, seeking a freer, more natural way of moving that reflected democratic ideals. Subsequent pioneers followed in her footsteps always searching for a new way of moving that reflected their own time, their own culture, and themselves. In the 1920's Martha Graham used breath to develop her contraction and release

style of modern dance. Her ideas and technique have dominated the genre ever since. Another founder, Doris Humphrey also explored breath as a source of movement. In her fall and recovery style, the human body's surrender to and mastery of gravity become dramatic inspiration for movement invention.

The next generation of modern dancers carried on the legacy of their mentors by continuing to revolt with new artistic ideas. José Limón enlarged the Humphrey tradition expanding its space and expressiveness. After dancing with Martha Graham, Merce Cunningham discarded Graham's expressive ideas, instead creating purely abstract dances, which brought back ballet vocabulary. Individual expression is sometimes the only recognizable feature of the diverse modern dance family.

Other branches of the modern dance family tree are rooted in cultural dance. Pearl Primus and Katherine Dunham were choreographers and African dance scholars of the early 20th century. Their research enriched their work and enhanced the African American contribution to both modern and jazz dancing. These influences and the Native American dance heritage inspired Lester Horton, whose style is another major technique used in modern dance training. The Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater grows from this tradition. Ailey's choreography has an exciting and eclectic style where the Horton style unites the strength of ballet, the rhythms of jazz, and the dance motifs of diverse cultures including African, Brazilian, and Caribbean. All of these influences unite to create a contemporary modern dance spectacle that reflects the past and the present.

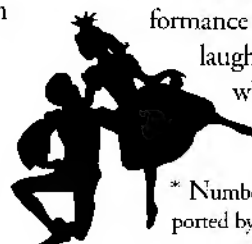


1. Discuss with students the kinds of dance they enjoy. Ask them to define dance and name different styles of dance. Have students research the characteristics of ballet, modern, jazz dance and tap, as well as how these characteristics were influenced by the cultures and historical periods from which these genres originated. (1.1 & 1.5)*

2. Ask students to learn a social dance from someone of their parents' or grandparents' generation. Have them share these dances with their classmates. Discuss how social and popular dances of each generation contribute to the jazz dance genre. (1.1 & 1.5)

3. Ask if any student studies a performing art, e.g., dance, voice, theater, a musical instrument, after school. Let them share with their classmates how they feel about their art form and how it rewards them. Discuss how practice and rehearsals impact their lives, e.g., in scheduling schoolwork, limiting time with friends, and enlisting their families support their endeavors. (1.6)

4. Show students a video of the work of one or more of



the choreographers mentioned in "Customs, Cultures, Social Forces," pg. 6. (See "Bibliography and Teachers' Resources," pg. 11.) Discuss how the dance genre developed, the characteristics of the genre and the style of the particular choreography. Have students choose and describe a memorable moment in the dance. Have them write this description and analyze how the choreographer used the elements of dance in this moment. Discuss what they felt while they were watching the dance. Discuss what the choreographer might have intended. (1.1 & 1.4 & 1.5)

5. Ask students if anyone in class has ever seen a live professional dance, theater, or music performance. Discuss audience behavior at these events and appropriate responses by audience members at appropriate moments: Why they should enjoy the concert silently and talk about the performance after the show. When to laugh or applaud or be quiet, e.g., when the house lights darken. (1.6)

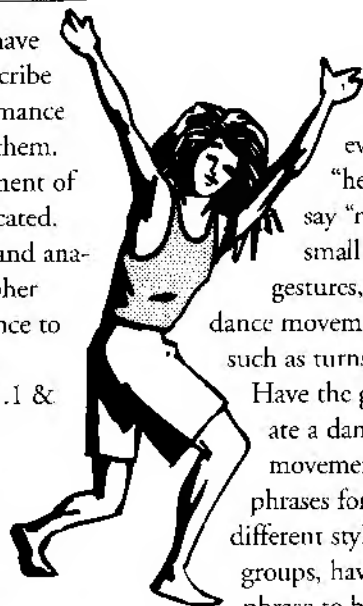
* Numbers indicate the Standard(s) supported by the activity.

AFTER THE PERFORMANCE

1. In open discussion, have students choose and describe a moment in the performance that was memorable to them. Discuss what the movement of that moment communicated. Have students describe and analyze how the choreographer used the elements of dance to convey meaning in that moment of the dance. (1.1 & 1.4)*

2. Have students discuss and compare a jazz dance and a modern dance in the concert. Discuss the differences in style, meaning, production, and choreographic intent. Analyze how the music contributed to the mood or meaning of the dance. Analyze how the technical aspects of the production (lighting, costumes, sets and props) contributed. (1.1 & 1.4)

3. Have students discuss how dance told a story in the modern dance *Planet Drum*. Have students analyze what they were feeling while watching the dance, and what the choreographer might have intended. Compare abstract movement communication with how the facial expressions and gestures of everyday movement communicate. (1.1 & 1.4)



4. Have everyone in the class find a simple gesture he or she does everyday, e.g., waving "hello," shaking the head to say "no." Divide the class into small groups to share their gestures, and develop them into dance movements by adding actions such as turns, jumps, falls, or runs.

Have the groups collaborate to create a dance phrase with these movements and perform their phrases for classmates. Then assign different styles of dance to different groups, having them redesign their phrase to be performed in jazz, modern, or balletic style. After sharing the new style phrases, have each group discuss how they developed their phrase and how they made artistic choices. Ask them to discuss how they edited, refined, and improved their phrase during the working process. (1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4)

5. Lead a group discussion having students recall all the artistic and technical production elements that came together in the *Dance Jam* performance. Discuss the potential for professional careers in dance including careers on stage and behind the scenes in theatrical production. (1.6)

* Numbers indicate the Standard(s) supported by the activity.

TEACHING SCIENCE THROUGH DANCE (K-8)

BY SHARON J. SHERMAN, Ed.D.

Using dance to teach science makes students active and engaged in the lesson as they experiment, solve problems creatively, and use their imaginations. Begin by reading one or more of the books for children listed below. Review the ideas presented. Explain that students will learn about dance and create dances to illustrate scientific principles.

Working in ample space, have students begin by moving their arms and stretching. Younger children might need to learn the body parts. Call out each part and have them move it. Older students can focus on the major muscle groups – the upper body muscles: the pectorals, latissimus dorsi, trapezius, deltoids, biceps, and triceps; the middle body muscles: the abdominals; and the lower body muscles: the hamstrings, quadriceps, abductors, calves, and gluteus maximus. Select a dance for them to do, e.g., bunny hop, electric slide, or one from the performance or a culture being studied. Which body parts and muscle groups do they use as they dance?

Or study solids, liquids, and gases through dance. The particles composing a solid stick rigidly to one another. The particles of a liquid cohere firmly, but not rigidly. They have great mobility while maintaining close contact with one another. A gas has no fixed shape or volume and spreads to fill its container. Gas particles collide with each other and the walls of their container. Students can simulate the motion of particles in dance.

Older students can create dances to demonstrate the Sun, Earth, and Moon system. As props, you will need three balls of different sizes and a flashlight. Explain that you will focus on motion and that the diameters of and distances between the Sun, the Earth, and the Moon are not to scale. Develop a dance to show how the Earth rotates on its spin axis, and explain why we have day and night. Then add the motion of the Earth's revolution around the Sun to explain why we have seasons. The Earth must tilt on its axis (23.5 degrees) and have a circular, not elliptical, orbit. Finally, create a dance to illustrate the relationship between the Earth, the Moon, and the Sun, showing why the Moon has different phases and does not always look the same.

Books for Children

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 Baylor, B. *Sometimes I Dance Mountains*. New York: Scribner's, 1973.
 Esbensen, B. *Dance with Me*. New York: HarperCollins, 1995.
 Isadora, R. *My Ballet Class*. New York: Greenwillow Books, 1980.

Web Sites for Teaching Science and Dance

Arts Lessons
<http://www.lessonstop.org/art.html>
<http://www.beelertechnologies.com/links/artlessons.htm>
<http://www.mcrel.org/resources/links/artslessons.asp>

Why Is the Shape of the Moon Always Changing?

<http://www.explorer.com.sg/hip-o/phase.htm>

Books for Teachers

Fogarty, R. *How to Integrate the Curriculum*. Palatine, IL: IRI/Skylight Publishing Company, 1993.

Sharon J. Sherman, Ed.D., Chair of the Department of Elementary and Early Childhood Education at The College of New Jersey, is the author of "Science and Science Teaching: Science Is Something You Can Do!" (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2000).

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